

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL
ON PUBLIC RELATIONS

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Who Are the Planners?

By NATHANIEL CANTOR

18 Firms Tell Their Public Relations Story

By BEN S. TRYNIN

VOLUME 2
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Editorial

ONE ATTRIBUTE apparently common to all who follow the public relations calling is a critical attitude. Sometimes it helps the worker; at other times it harms him. Certainly at all times it affects his work.

Consider the case of the public relations man who is called in by management to "fix up" a bad situation that has developed inside or outside the business. He is given a free hand. He looks into everything possible in order to get his bearings. He finds many bad spots here and there—products of shortsightedness, poor management, failure to do the obviously sound thing, and a host of other familiar reasons.

The public relations man pulls the situation together. He sets things in order. A new program grows under his watchful direction. The "boss" gives him the green light to move ahead.

Then, with his job well in hand and going strong, he no longer finds himself the center of attention. Management shifts to other problems and activities. Some of these clash with the public relations program. Old management habits and errors reappear. The boss pulls back on some activities and plans that have been started. The work of the public relations man is complicated no end. He finds himself in difficulty on several fronts. He becomes resentful and critical.

What has happened *may* be inexcusable from the standpoint of management. It *certainly* is inexcusable from the stand-

point of the public relations man. He has allowed himself the privilege of being critical when he had no right to be. He has arrogated unto himself the rôle of top management rather than the rôle to which he has been assigned. He has thought of himself as knowing better what the business should do, not alone on the public relations but also on all other fronts, than anyone else. His critical attitude has clouded his vision and built up in him a false sense of his own importance.

But the above case is not typical, you may protest. Unfortunately, on the contrary, it is. Many an otherwise able and sound public relations worker digs his own grave with his critical attitude. He develops the habit of looking for what's wrong, not for what's right. At first his criticisms are unconscious, and thus unexpressed. But with the passing of time they come to the surface and find pointed expression. Then the fat's in the fire. Like begets like. He in turn is criticized, and he grows resentful. And from that point on his usefulness wanes.

Sound public relations demands alertness and a bit of healthy scepticism in the one who practices it, to be sure. But what the worker thinks and does must be *constructive*. That is the key to efficiency and success. A man who can see shortcomings and bad judgment in his superiors and yet keep sweet and helpful in working with and for them is the one who is in demand in public relations. There is no place for the critic, the know-it-all, the one with the superiority complex.

Who Are the Planners?

By NATHANIEL CANTOR

Chairman, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Buffalo

IT IS APPARENT to any competent social scientist that the Western Democracies are passing through an acute crisis.

The basic conflict, most of us would agree, is in the economic area. The industrial and financial leaders who control the life blood of our economic system must decide on this basic issue: What, in their own thinking and feeling, is more important, the lives of people and a peaceful society or the interests of stockholders and a possible third world war? This is no brief for silly social plans of overnight changes of the basic structure of our society. It is rather a plea to management to recognize its profound and pivotal role in planning a gradual modification of our traditional ways of conducting industrial enterprise. There are many paths in which such changes may be effected, such as wages, prices, and co-operation with government.

One of the areas through which better relations between management and labor may be established is employee counseling. Management must recognize that employees are not merely wage earners, that is, so many hands which affect labor costs, but that they are human beings working together in a social as well as industrial setting.*

Social and Industrial Activities

Employees bring to work their hearts as well as their tools. They engage in social as well as industrial activities for eight hours a day. Here is a golden opportunity for management to recognize the dignity of its employees. It is as if they were to say, "You and I are engaged in the manufacture and production of

goods. We want to make money and you want to make a decent wage. These are both legitimate and honorable interests. However, we recognize the fact that your welfare and satisfaction on the job is just as important to us and to the country as is the making of money. You want to feel that you are important, that you are approved of, that you are creating something of significance. You want approval as do we. What is it that causes you to be dissatisfied on the job? Are there matters in which we can be of help to you? We are willing to see to it that for the eight hours a day you spend at this work you ought to be doing more than making a wage. You should be getting satisfaction out of your work and out of being associated with us. How can we help?

Essence of Good Morale

Incidentally, by making employees psychologically more effective, they will become industrially more efficient. In simpler language people always do better work when they feel happy about what they are doing. This is the essence of good morale.

There are over five hundred corporations in the United States today who have some form of counseling service for employees. What motivates this service? Is it to get more work out of the employees, or is it based upon a spirit of wanting to help them?

Labor union officials and employees are not going to be fooled. They will sense very quickly whether this service is an oleaginous display of beneficence, or whether it represents a sincere recognition of the contribution that employees are making to the industrial corporation. In the former case, the personnel program is directly set up to increase produc-

*This point of view of a new approach to industrial psychology has been described in detail in *Employee Counseling*, by Nathaniel Cantor (McGraw-Hill, '45).

tion and, incidentally, to help employees in their problems. The latter attitude is premised upon an unaffected, sincere interest in employees as co-workers in doing a useful service. Incidentally, more goods will be produced.

The difference in spirit will have far-reaching consequences for the worker. It will help allay the understandable distrust that employees have for management. It will change the spirit and atmosphere of labor controversies. There will be a respect for honest differences of opinion. The employees will have a pervasive sense of management's interest in them as human beings in their own right.

A genuine employee counseling program is certainly an important device through which management can build the finest kind of public relations. This can take place, however, only if top management sincerely believes that employees are human beings as themselves. Management must have genuine faith in a living democracy. They must attend to their own interests, to the interests of the stockholders, and to the interests of employees, their country, and the problems of peace everywhere.

Revealed in History

To understand the need for soundly conceived employee counseling programs one has but to review economic history. It reveals the background of present day industrial conflict.

The laissez-faire political and economic doctrines of the nineteenth century permitted and supported the expansion of capitalist enterprise. The Industrial Revolution swept through one country after another. The population of Europe doubled between 1800 and 1900. Materials were available, so were the machines, the manpower, the capital, and the markets. Goods flooded the world. The machinery of government was at hand to pass the necessary legislation to assist the expansion of capitalist enterprise in each particular country. Toward

the close of the nineteenth century the pressure of markets was felt and the half-dozen European countries carved up and dished out Africa. Colonies, it was felt, were necessary either for new sources of raw materials or as markets for manufactured products.

More Background

By the twentieth century England alone remained on a free trade basis. Protective tariffs was the rule for all countries seeking to sell their goods while at the same time making it more difficult for foreign countries to export goods to them, thus building balances with which to trade.

Capitalist enterprise in the early twentieth century was still expanding. New devices were created for expanding credits. Technological developments, combinations of smaller into larger units, more efficient methods of production and distribution resulted in lowered costs. Industrial capitalism gave way to monopoly capitalism which, in turn, was superseded by finance capitalism. Under finance capitalism, the ownership of industry was separated from its control and management. Control passed into the hands of a few "insiders" although ownership was spread among hundreds of thousands. The financial backers exerted control of policy through membership on the boards of the industrial corporations.

Nineteenth century liberal thinking had worked; freedom of contract, protection of private property, equality of opportunity, those who ran the risks were entitled to the returns. Work hard, be thrifty, save, invest, and get your reward. Each for himself and in the long run, "naturally," everyone will benefit. Supply and demand will regulate prices. Free competition will force inferior goods out, and drive prices lower.

The greatest empire of machines in the hands of private investors has given us an economy of scarcity and two World Wars in one generation. The system has peri-

odically failed to provide the great mass of people with sufficient income to purchase the goods our factories are capable of producing. Unemployment is the most serious economic problem of modern society. The problem of today is not whether we are going to return to the nineteenth century principle of an unregulated, haphazard, free enterprise system. Planning we are going to have. The questions are whether the planning will be good or bad, and for whom, and who will do the planning?

What Is Happening?

How many of our American leaders in industry, labor, and government recognize what is happening? That is difficult to say. The governments of France and England, indeed, the majority of the people of those countries, certainly see what is happening. They understand how what has happened has come about. They don't like it and they, the common people, are determined to have something different.

In the United States, currently, every Monday, there appears in hundreds of large city papers, a full page ad of the National Association of Manufacturers. They ask whether it isn't true that all Americans want more goods? Of course. Well, then, why don't we just cut out the wrangling. Let the government pass legislation holding management and the unions equally responsible; let's just get rid of ceiling prices so goods will be produced profitably. Prices will shoot up, for a while, but they'll come down later. We are not told what happens in the meantime.

In the United States, the labor leaders are concerned with cents and hours and "take-home pay." The members of the N.A.M., the rank and file membership and leaders of the unions have the right to work for prices and wages in any way which the law allows. These are important matters in the day-to-day struggle for existence and survival of the worker,

and for the return on investments of management.

But, as was stated in the editorial of the *PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL* for January, 1946,

"You would think that with the menace of the atomic bomb hanging over the world, and with people everywhere at their wits' end trying to find ways of solving the terrible problems that beset them, public relations workers would be devoting their major time and attention to developing a clear understanding of what is taking place in the world about us.

"But evidently this is not the case. Instead of a lessening of, there is actually an increase in, the clamor for more information about the tools and techniques and less attention given to the principles and background material of public relations. Many directors and counselors, as well as members of their staffs, continue to talk about how to do this or that so that they can make money more easily. They give little attention to vital and pressing social problems, which should guide their thinking and activities."

A Pressing Problem

One of the most pressing problems in American life today is getting sensitive, socially minded leaders into positions of authority in important areas of government, education, industry, and labor. Our institutions are changing and will continue to change whether we like it or not. The changes will be forced upon us by the blind accidents of history or we can attempt to regulate the direction of change. At best our greatest efforts will be feeble in relation to the terrific pressure of institutional forces. Just because the shadows about us are so thick is all the more reason to use the feeble light of intelligence and good will which is all we have to guide us.

Every profound social issue can, in the final analysis, be stated very simply. A statement about the crisis in modern life

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is no exception. The issue is, What is more important, if the alternative has to be faced, as it must be, the quest for money profit or the respect for human dignity?

Two Fundamentals

No society can exist on a peaceful basis unless two fundamental elements are present. In the first place, the majority of the members of any group must agree on certain goals and purposes. They must accept a certain way of life. Secondly, every society must define, regulate, and control the ways in which these goals are to be achieved.

Our way of life in the United States in the twentieth century consists of many strands. We have inherited the Christian-Judaic view of life. We say we believe in the inviolability of individual sovereign personalities. All men should have free and equal opportunities to develop their individual differences. The golden rule is our basic spiritual sentiment. We believe in faith, hope, charity, kindness, and sympathy. These represent some of our basic moral values which we strive for.

In addition, we have imposed upon this moral set of beliefs and sentiments the goal of "success." Generally, success is defined in economic terms and is measured by money income and the things which money commands and the prestige which accompanies possessing the things.

What has happened is that the attainment of our Christian goals has become inconsistent with the attainment of our financial goals. If we strive for one set of values, we must, in large measure, deny the other set. It is not easy to be genuinely Christian in a competitive, economic world.

Furthermore, if the means to attain these goals are destroyed, frustration results or we create different means of attaining them which are not approved of by society. For example, if we can't become successful by honest work, that is, through legitimate means, we will create black markets and reach our goal through illegitimate means. The great incidence of crime in the United States, for example, is a reflection of the fact that so many people want to become successful but cannot attain success through the limited opportunities provided them in an era of great unemployment and cannot obtain the things which extensive advertising leads them to want.

Another alternative may be accepted. We may give lip service to the goals of society and transform the means of attaining the goals into ends in themselves. That is, for example, the making of money may become an end in itself.

If the two fundamental elements of society, namely, the agreed upon goals and the means of achieving them, are not geared to each other we get an unstable social order which is, of course, what we have today. We have made the means of attaining success, namely, the pursuit of financial reward, an end in itself, thereby denying our belief in the dignity of man or, more generally, in the golden rule.

Leads to Chaos

The end product of this is chaos to which we came dangerously close in the second World War. In some way we must redefine and revivify our inherited spiritual sentiments and must create modified legitimate means of attaining them. This calls for renewed faith on the part of our leaders in every area of life.

"Unless man is able to master the machine and to use it for the highest ends of human existence, what has been heralded in some quarters as the dawn of a better age for humanity may prove to be nothing more than the twilight of a civilization that has already run its course." —JOHN U. NEF.

Eighteen Firms Tell Their Public Relations Story

By BEN S. TRYNIN

Research Director, American Council on Public Relations

AS THE FIRST STEP in the year's research project of the Council—an attempt to learn something about the "modus operandi" of various American organizations in regard to their current public relations policies, practices, tools and techniques—about 1000 letters were mailed to Council members and leading non-member firms, requesting them to supply information on these topics.

The following article is a preliminary report on 18 of the interesting—and most significant—replies received. They have been selected because they tell a public relations story that it is expected will change little in its essential features when the final whole study is written.

Most of the respondents are "Small Business" men. Half of the organizations covered in this report employ less than a thousand workers. Only two employ more than 20,000 workers. The total picture:

<i>No. of employees</i>	<i>Firms</i>
Under 1,000	9
1,000 to 20,000	5
Over 20,000	2
Not stated	2

Eleven of the firms have been established for more than twenty-five years—three are over 100 years old; five firms are in the 5- to 25-year bracket. Only two have been established less than five years.

Indicating that planned public relations programs are not confined to "million-dollar concerns" is the business-volume analysis of the group. The volume of business was not too large, in a number of cases, and might be misleading if we did not know that included were trade associations, advertising and public relations agencies, and a university, where volume of transactions is an er-

roneous measure of the nature of influence and problems involved.

<i>Volume of Transactions</i>	<i>Firms</i>
Under \$100,000 yearly	7
\$100,000 to \$250,000 yearly	1
Over \$250,000 yearly	9
Not stated	1

One thing the report shows is that not a few organizations which carry on consistent public relations programs hesitate to admit that they are making a deliberate public relations effort. In some organizations there is no "public relations executive." But a president, a vice president, or an assistant to the president happens to be strongly public relations conscious, and so imbues the others in his organization with his vivid example. In other organizations no organized effort is made to cultivate good will with persons or groups, except through personal letters, chats, luncheons, dinners, and participation in community affairs.

But now let us proceed to view the replies given by the 18 organizations to the first question:

What Are Our Major Objectives?

Objectives motivating their various public relations programs were phrased with a varying gradation of meaning. In general, however, their meaning could be classified according to the purpose which was apparently intended:

a) *Educational*—to present facts not completely known to those groups whose interest and action were thought to be essential.

b) *Recognitive*—to remind these groups of facts presumed to be known by them, but often (or always) overlooked.

c) *Stimulative*—to spur these groups

to action, on the basis of facts made known, and already realized by them.

Accepting such arbitrary grouping, which admittedly will overlap, we may describe these various objectives as follows:

Educational Objectives

1) To present facts in proper form to:

Customers	6
Employees	3
Stockholders	0*
Others	4

*Although none professed the improvement of stockholder relations to be a recognized objective, it was noticed that not a few engaged in various activities concerned with stockholder relations, as will be seen in later paragraphs. Evidently such objective was merely taken for granted and omitted from all replies in connection with this phase of the survey.

2) To reveal the public service rendered by the company in:

Providing industrial leadership	1
Producing good products or services	3
Developing the nation's resources	1
Offering a good employership	2

3) To detect or verify the public's attitude toward the company 1

4) To interpret to management the public's attitude 1

5) To correct—or avoid—any public misconception about:

Own company	3
Total industry	2
The American economic system	2

6) To clear up the "bigness" problem 1

7) To expose "bureaucratic propaganda" 1

8. To teach consumers how to obtain a better product-use 1

9) To demonstrate to industry the specific uses (and benefits) of good public relations practices 2

Recognitive Objectives

1) To remind company executives of the everyday need of good public relations practices 4

2) To remind employees of the

everyday need of good public relations practices 3

3) To keep the identity of the company's name alive in the public mind:

In association with its various brand names	1
In place of merged companies formerly identified <i>per se</i>	1
4) To remind the public of basic American economic principles	1
5) To expose the "divided loyalty" problem created by labor agitators	1

Stimulative Objectives

1) To integrate the public relations efforts of:

Various company executives and departments	3
Allied companies, association members, etc.	2

2) To create a better teamwork among:

Company executives and departments	4
--	---

Supervisors and employees	1
Different companies in the same industry	1
Different companies in the same community	1

3) To improve employee relations 4

4) To develop confidence among suppliers 1

5) To improve community relations	1
6) To allay "postwar unrest" among:	
Impatient customers	2
Merchandise-less dealers	1

Employees 2

7) To reveal postwar goals (to inspire public confidence):

Of company production	1
Of company payrolls	1

8) To increase public regard of rôle played by:

Own company	4
Total industry	2

9) To improve governmental policy toward:

Own company	3
Total industry	1

10) To combat "anti-management" attitudes 2

11) To improve relations with government, labor and public (by playing square) 2

In general, these were the themes. Of course, the nature of these objectives varied with the size of the company (for example, it was a big company which faced the "bigness" problem), the type of operations (an advertising agency found it necessary to improve the public relations of the public relations business), the type of community, etc.

One respondent admitted that it was easier for him to define his own company's objectives than to carry them out.

Only a single company professed to be moved by a single objective; most companies had several objectives created by the fact that their transactions involved them with numerous publics simultaneously.

That a considerable number realized that their *internal* relations were as important to company welfare as *external* relations—which are more often considered in the public relations domain—is a gratifying sign to those who watch the trend of the times. If good public relations work should begin at home, then it was apparent that not a few organizations have become quite aware of this maxim.

Who Is Responsible?

Titles borne by those heading the public relations function varied, as was to be expected; were occasionally misleading. For example: in one case an "owner" professed to direct his own activity. Closer examination, however, revealed that he owned an advertising agency, and devoted most of his time to the public relations branch of his agency.

In another case a "first vice president" revealed himself to be active in this phase of his company's work; a follow-up inquiry developed the fact that his organization was a smaller one and that he applied over fifty per cent of his time to the solution of public and industrial

relations problems of his company. In fact, as a mere "first vice president" he was found to have read more books, attended more public relations courses and conferences, than some public relations practitioners in his community.

Titles, by and large, were non-revealing and had a secondary significance:

<i>Title of P.R. Head</i>	<i>No. of Firms</i>
President	1
Vice President	1
1st Vice President	1
Owner	1
Partner	1
Assistant to President	1
Director of Public Relations	6
Public Relations Director	1
Manager, Public Relations Division	2
Director of Public Services	1
Director of Adv. & Public Relations	1
Not stated	1

Although several firms reported that their public relations activities included advertising, only one firm applied the title of "director of advertising and public relations" to the person heading its public relations department.

Of the thirteen public relations executives who were not owners, partners, president or vice presidents, six failed to state the titular rank of the company officer overseeing their efforts, or approving their policies. Of the seven reporting to whom they were responsible, four were directly responsible to the president, three to vice presidents or other department heads. One stated: "I have the implied authority of the president to support my contacts with others."

In two cases the public relations executive cleared policy matters with the president and a committee of directors as well.

How Large Is the Staff?

Only two reporting firms maintained public relations staffs with personnel in excess of 10 persons (including secretarial); two had staffs of from 5 to 10; nine had staffs of less than 5. Three firms reported no staff personnel to assist their

public relations head.

It was startling to find a single public relations executive often carrying on with only a secretary, but operating over a nationwide territory. In such a case, it was apparent that the single executive was considered the *prime mover* of his company's public relations activity. A major part of his job was to win over the heads and employees of other departments to perform an integrated public relations program of wide dimensions.

Some pertinent comments were: "We work closely with other departments," or "we simply coordinate the efforts of other operating departments along public relations lines," or "we are ex-officio members of the sales, purchasing, and other departments of the business."

Departmental Structures

The organization of the public relations departments surveyed varied with the size of budgets and activities covered. In general, however, they were of two types: a) The simple staff, usually consisting of an assistant and a secretary, or a "news bureau writer" and several secretaries; and b) the multiple-unit staff consisting of specialized units concerned with specific functions, media, or groups.

In staff organizations of the latter type the following functions were implied from the various titles mentioned by respondents:

- 1) Press and Publications Section
- 2) Publicity Bureau
- 3) Motion Picture Bureau
- 4) Stockholders Section
- 5) Employee Service Section
- 6) Division of Consumer Information
- 7) Consumer Services Section
- 8) Home Service Department
- 9) Institutional Advertising Section
- 10) Educational Services Section
- 11) Special Events Section
- 12) Company Information Section
- 13) Local (Community, Plant) Representatives.

Practices, Tools, Techniques

Periodicals: Yearly, monthly, weekly publications, of one variety or another, have a wide usage. Some were letters, others bulletins, but the greater number are prepared with an evident care and expense—for the variously interested audiences.

Nine firms issue monthly publications: to employees, 5; dealers, trade, press and community each rate one. Annual reports to stockholders, employees, customers and suppliers are under the public relations guidon in seven of the reporting organizations.

Emphasis is placed on employee relations in this area as evidenced by the fact that eleven firms employ, as part of their public relations activity, some form of regular publication pointed directly to the employee interest. These range from elaborate, letter-press magazines to personalized messages over the president's signature.

Press Releases: Releases to newspapers, magazines, trade press, and minor publications, were almost universally used tools.

Most interesting was the description of how one public relations executive distributed the releases originated by his organization. Not only does he send them to the press—a general custom—but he also mails them to suppliers, trade groups, and various public-minded and public-influencing men and women. In every case his releases are personally addressed and signed by the company officer or employee familiar to the person addressed. (For example: the purchasing agent signs releases addressed to suppliers.)

One organization supplemented its news releases with a state-wide pictorial-news service which supplied (free) photographs to a long list of country weeklies.

Employee Benefits: Seven respondents included among their public relations activities various employee-benefit activities. These are of two kinds: 1) Non-

pecuniary benefits such as baseball league, bowling contests, club activities, and gifts (holiday) to employees and enlisted personnel. 2) Pecuniary benefits such as bonuses, profit-sharing plans, and service awards.

Motion Pictures: The use of films was mentioned by three firms, one of which—a railroad—had set up a special sub-department for this purpose with representatives in three cities. This group not only plans film programs, but supervises production and arranges distribution. Another organization mentioned that it was “going in strong for colored-film presentations,” and a third is making special efforts to produce motion pictures for showing in public schools; to penetrate the juvenile market.

Radio: Use of radio was reported by three. One—a nationwide food packager—employed a coast-to-coast network program as a good will builder. During the war the program—including time and talent—was donated to patriotic purposes, principally OWI presentations. Another respondent, noted for the excellence of his radio programs, failed to include the use of radio among his public relations tools. It is assumed that his company chooses to regard its radio expenditure as sales promotion.

Advertising: Institutional advertising is used by two reporting firms in a steady, all-year campaign in the daily press. One maintained an additional schedule for weeklies and other minor publications.

Miscellany

The matter of “budgets” was shrouded in vague comment. Only one respondent, a college, mentioned a definite amount, ten thousand dollars annually, allocated to the public relations activity. Others stated that expenditures were “spasmodic and irregular,” or “flexible” and “varied according to conditions.” A few bluntly refused any budget information. One respondent explained his inability to determine the total public relations expendi-

ture because costs in this area were allocated among the administrative expenses of the various operating departments aided by the public relations operation.

Ten of the reporting firms included “correspondence contacts” under the public relations function. Letters to prospects, customers, stockholders, and general public were originated or reviewed by the public relations department.

Printed literature—pamphlets, books, manuals, charts, posters, dividend enclosures, counter folders, and others—is a widely accepted public relations tool. In most cases literature was created for specific publics and purposes—consumers, stockholders, medical, rural, juvenile, educational groups—and distributed by the public relations department. Some pieces, counter folders for example, were prepared for distribution by employees who had contact with the public.

Personal Contacts

The survey revealed that personal contacts with members and groups of important publics is an organized operation of most public relations departments. Not that the public relations executive or a member of his staff usually performs the contact job; rather, they most frequently are the arrangers. Regional meetings of stockholders figured prominently. One organization holds regular regional meetings for its new and old stockholders at which the board chairman personally greets the owners; products are exhibited; company activities are illustrated by films. A brief talk by the chief executive is followed by refreshments. Other groups which receive important personal contact emphasis are legislative, employee, consumer, trade, school, rural, civic, and juvenile.

Research finds almost universal use among respondents to guide their public relations activities and policies. Several organizations share the results of their research with others in the industry and community. One firm spent substantial

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funds for industrial research and published the results for the benefits of all employers in the community.

Several organizations regularly conduct "open house" for various publics, principally employees' families, the press, the community, and students.

Contributions to local civic, charitable and other public organizations were mentioned by one firm as an expenditure controlled solely by the public relations head.

The public platform was accorded attention by all respondents. All believed that speeches made by company officers, executives, and public relations men were excellent prestige builders. Significant: all respondents, except two, distributed printed copies of public addresses—made by company executives—to trade, rural, educational and general groups, and to association members, bankers, stockholders and public officials.

A Few Respondents' Remarks

The philosophy of public relations: "Our major public relations problem today is to hit precisely at what the general philosophy of public relations aims, which is, a more enlightened understanding on the part of the public of the part [our industry] plays in the life of the individual."—*David Porter*, Public Relations Director, Surety Association of America.

On personalizing the industry message: "Lately we have gone to a small, daily advertisement (2 columns by 3 inches) ... using a fictitious character ... to represent our industry. Each day he says' some interesting fact ... slanted to an improved understanding of our own business and all business in general."—*Nelson Aldrich*, Director of Public Relations, Utah Copper Company.

Rôle played by own industry: "Railroads are just the office boys of business."—*Bert Claypool*, Assistant in Public Relations, Illinois Central System.

The biggest problem: "We consider

our biggest problem to be the creation of an atmosphere . . . conducive to free enterprise of the kind that enabled our company to grow."—*G. L. Ward*, S. K. Kress & Company.

Our basic policy: "Our company has for many years possessed a reputation for performing strictly the terms of contracts . . . and meeting fully its obligations to employees. This is probably our basic [public relations] policy . . . and solves a host of problems as they arise."—*H. W. Morrison*, President, Morrison-Knudsen Company, Inc.

Depends on everybody's behavior: "Our company operates in public relations by schooling the whole executive group in P. R. thinking and action, on the theory that *what* they do and *how* they do it will be most of our public relations program."—*K. M. Russell*, Assistant to the President, International Detrola Corporation.

On teamwork: "Our staff is considered an ex-officio part of every other department . . ."—*Albert Carriere*, Public Relations Director, C. H. Masland & Sons.

Candor vs. alibi: "We have had excellent results in frankly admitting our difficulties and explaining what we are doing to overcome them."—*Carl Brand*, First Vice President, National Title Insurance Company.

Importance of objectivity: "Usually the [public relations] study is conducted from the outside first, with an eye to getting the disinterested person's point of view . . ."—*Chet Swital*, partner, Swital-Newcomb & Associates.

Goes a bit farther: "Our Department of Public Services is basically a public relations department. But it goes a bit beyond that . . . extends into the field of services to special public groups . . ."—*Abbott Washburn*, Assistant to the Director, General Mills, Inc.

Public Relations and Publicity

By WILLIAM A. A. CASTELLINI

Vice President, Stokes, Palmer, Dinerman, Inc., Cincinnati

“THE GOOD OPINION of mankind, like the lever of Archimedes, with the given fulcrum, moves the world,” said Thomas Jefferson.

And, today’s first order of business, I venture to say, is “public opinion.”

Why? Well . . .

Today, more people read, write and vote, use the telephone, see the movies, travel and listen to the radio, than ever before in the history of the United States.

Today, the emphasis is on mass production, mass consumption and mass impression.

Today, popular participation in government makes the molding and management of public opinion the first order of business.

We recognize public opinion in the making when we see it first as a matter of discontent believed capable of correction by group action; then as a matter of general expression; next in the stage of controversy and discussion that gets into the news; and, finally when a decision is reached or a judgment is made.

Lately, we hear much about pressure groups and propaganda in connection with the formation of public opinion. Are they new phenomena?

No! Not according to Harwood L. Childs in his foreword to “Pressure Groups and Propaganda” which appeared May, 1935, in *The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*.

But what is propaganda?

Propaganda has been defined as “the expression of opinion or action by individuals or groups deliberately designed to influence opinions or actions of other individuals or groups with reference to predetermined ends.”

Space does not permit our discussing

some of the ABC’s of propaganda analysis. Suffice it to say that we are fooled by propaganda chiefly because we do not recognize it when we see it.

The most effective way to deal with propaganda, once we recognize it, is to suspend our judgment until we obtain the essential facts and implications involved in the propaganda.

With the foregoing as a brief background, let us discuss “public relations” about which we hear so much these days.

What do we mean by “public relations”?

Though public relations has been variously defined, business leaders generally agree that public relations is “the art of creating, through action, speech, the printed word or visible symbol, a favorable public opinion for their company, its products and services.”

They expect their public relations counselor, whether he is an employee of the company, a professional on a fee basis, or a member of the company’s advertising agency, to be capable of interpreting their company to the public and the public to the company; of determining and controlling policies of action; of establishing public reaction and opinion; of studying and analyzing social, economic and other trends; and, of generating ideas for the dramatization of the company’s policy, products and services.

They expect their public relations counselor to recognize the fact that corporations, firms and individual businesses are vitally concerned with the realization of gross and net profits; with their right to exist, prosper and grow; and with their ability to gain, hold and increase public respect, favor and support.

They expect their public relations counselor to know that the public relations of

their companies are those relationships which arise out of contract or contact with their customers, employes, suppliers, competitors, stockholders, creditors, local community and government—city, county, state and federal.

Finally, they expect their public relations counselor to follow the basic principles of procedure as follows: learn the objectives of the company; analyze the situation by getting the facts and evaluating them; plan a definite scheduled program; direct the execution of the program; study the results; and, modify the procedure when, as and if necessary.

Not Direct Selling

It will be well to realize that public relations does not attempt to do direct selling; that it works to establish the prestige of the client and the confidence of the consumer. Also that public relations can be controlled and directed; that the prescribed program can be put into execution by the head of the concern or institution; that its value can be measured and its course plotted.

Experience teaches that the technique of public relations is the technique of the public relations counselor who knows how to organize pressure groups and who is expert in the use of the instruments of opinion dissemination . . . the Press . . . the Radio . . . and the Motion Picture.

An important phase of the work of the public relations counselor is the creation, preparation and placement of publicity which Raymond C. Mayer defines as "the act of presenting information in inviting and widely interesting form through enlisting the help of the most effective mediums of communication to gain an audience at the proper time and in the proper place."

In his book *Public Relations of Business*, Milton Wright says, "Publicity is the method and means by which you acquaint your public with your activities; it is explaining your policies; it is teaching the public facts that they should

know for their own economic and social benefit and for the benefit of the community as a whole."

But, no matter whether you use celebrations, shows, parades, rallies, conventions, conferences, institutes, symposia, hunts, races or stunts to publicize your idea, cause, product or service, remember that the nine classes of things that give pleasure and satisfaction to the average individual are: 1) struggles, 2) romance, 3) mystery, 4) adventure, 5) the unusual, 6) human beings, 7) children, 8) animals, 9) amusements and hobbies.

This statement is supported by figures given by James Davis Woolf in his article, "What Most Americans Read," which appeared full length in *Common Sense* and later in condensed form in the *Catholic Digest*.

He cited the monthly paid circulation of the pulp magazines at 9,263,000 with a possible readership of from 20 to 25 million—of the confession magazines at 7,976,000 with some 25 million persons enjoying "all this vicarious sin and salvation"—of 3,223,000 detective magazines being read by 10 million persons—to which he added 10,755,000 copies of "fan" publications and the 25,215,000 comics, not to mention the Sunday newspaper funnies, daily comic and adventure strips.

Figures Challenging

Public relations workers must find a challenge in these figures, especially when they are studied in the light of the April, 1944, bulletin (Vol. 38, No. 4) of the American Library Association which disclosed that in Chicago: a little better than 10 per cent of the population are adult registered book borrowers; in Detroit: slightly more than 13 per cent. In Philadelphia: less than 5 per cent. In Boston: less than 11 per cent. In New Orleans: about 7 per cent. In St. Louis: about 12 per cent. While these figures refer to holders of library cards, a holder is not necessarily a regular user.

STRIKES AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

By REX F. HARLOW

President, American Council on Public Relations

AN INDUSTRIALIST was talking the other day about the public relations of General Motors Corporation in connection with the recent strike of its automobile workers. He waxed enthusiastic.

"General Motors has saved private industry," said he. "It kept organized labor and the government from taking over industry. If it hadn't refused to open its books for inspection by the government, Reuther of UAW would have taken over operation of the company. That would have opened the way for government to step in and do the same thing with all business companies. And then the freedom we've talked so much about in this country would have been gone forever."

The industrialist pounded his desk. "Yes, sir; General Motors has saved the business of this country. It ought to have the heart-felt gratitude of every business man in America."

Another View

Another man, the editor of a trade publication which serves business, was also talking about the General Motors strike. "You know," he commented, "I think General Motors has done a lousy job of public relations. Have you noticed how the general public has turned against the company because of the way it has handled itself during the strike?"

He shook his head. "Instead of trying to win the public the company has seemed to do everything it could to show its arrogance. I don't see what the top people in the company have been thinking about. They certainly must be blind or they would understand that the general public is disgusted with the high-handed way in which they have treated President Truman, the Government, and their

workmen. It'll take years for them to live down the bad impression they have created."

Still another man, himself the head of a moderate size manufacturing business which carries on operations throughout the nation, made the following comment: "I've been much interested in watching the public relations of General Motors during the strike. They've done a lot of fine things, but at the same time they've been guilty of a number of stupid public relations moves. I have appreciated their holding out against opening their books for inspection in order to decide what increase in wages should be given to striking employees. But I have thought that they made a terrible blunder in thumbing their noses at the Government as they have done. You don't make friends by being obstinate and stiff-necked, even if you are big and powerful. That's not the way Americans play the game."

And there you have it.

To public relations men and women the struggle has been of particular significance. Few have failed to take advantage of the opportunity to observe what was being done by the conflicting forces, analyze the results and develop opinions as to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the activities that have been undertaken.

Carefully Laid Plans Required

One significant fact stands out among the welter of ideas, opinions and comments. It is that the top management of General Motors must have had in mind the exact public toward which the company addressed its public relations efforts. Otherwise all that the company did would have been a mere hodge-podge of happenstances. Hewing to the line and

letting the chips fall where they may is seldom a luxury in which great organizations can indulge. They have to work according to plans, carefully laid.

Then the question naturally arises: To what public did General Motors address its public relations efforts? Has it tried primarily to win the approval and friendship of industry, considering the good will of business interests of first importance? And if so, could it afford to resist the Government and Organized Labor, on the assumption that the general public would understand and approve?

Obviously only top management could answer these questions. Members of the public relations department could do no more than advise top management; they could not make the decisions. Deciding is a policy matter. The officials of the company, guided by the board, had to set up company goals and indicate in broad outlines the procedures and tools for achieving them. Not until then could the public relations department take over and carry on.

An Old Problem

This illustrates anew one of the oldest and most-discussed problems in public relations. For years public relations men and women have been talking among themselves about the pressing need for their top officials to develop a better understanding of public relations. They have been saying that the lack of knowledge of public relations among their top officials has been the biggest stumbling block in their work. They have bemoaned the difficulties which this deficit has bred among rank-and-file employees as well as lesser officials. Without sympathetic understanding and support from top management they have been unable to do many things which would have made their efforts more effective and useful. The field has centered the attention of many

Fortunately, more business officials today are becoming students of public relations. The war quickened the interest

of executives in the subject. And the tremendous activity in recent days in the on the public relations function. The result has been that the heads of numerous companies have felt that there was a definite trend toward public relations and have decided to go along with the crowd.

Public relations departments have been organized. Directors have been installed. Staffs have been employed. A general bustle and stir have resulted, with various activities undertaken to capture public interest and friendship. But not nearly all this activity has been the result of careful thought and precise knowledge.

More Than Name Needed

Professor N. S. B. Gras of Harvard points this out in his article, "Shifts in Public Relations," which appears in the *Bulletin of The Business Historical Society*, October, 1945: "We should remember that the mere existence of a public relations department does not insure good public relations."

He goes on to say that the specialized department can do all the little things and arrange the mechanics of many situations and even help in numberless detailed ways, all important: "But, still there are decisions of company policy which only the board of directors can make that are of much greater weight. For instance, should prices be raised or lowered? Should employment be curtailed? Should an umbrella be held over smaller competitors? Should large sums be devoted to this or that charity? Should a new patent be used or shelved? Should the company add to its line of products or multiply its functions?"

He sums up by saying, "We come back to the idea that business policy creates public relations."

The importance of employees in public relations is emphasized by Dr. Gras. He significantly comments on their influence on top management leadership as follows:

"A public relations department in our day has to look closely to two groups which need education along its line. One is, of course, the general public. The other is a great many older employees in the company itself, whether in high or low position. Many of these are as recalcitrant and unenlightened on the subject of public relations as could be found even outside the field of business. Perhaps the most difficult departments to convert are the legal, accounting, and financial; the easiest are manufacturing, transportation, research, sales, advertising, and industrial relations. But in truth, the problem of internal regeneration is at first essentially a personal matter. The president or chairman of the board and a few directors may take the effective leadership. Thereupon they may create a department of public relations, but the whole procedure is partly experimental and tentative. Others within the organization may not be convinced of the value of the new-fangled set-up. The youthful department must, in fact, struggle to function on the outside before there has been a complete conquest on the inside. Such are the growing pains of institutional development."

Those of us in public relations can agree with Dr. Gras that public relations work is complex and difficult. Most people do not understand it. Which means that the task of educating officials, employees, stockholders and the general public is ever present. But among all these groups none is as important as top officials. They can make or break any program. When they are loyal and vigorous in their support, nine times out of ten the program is successful—if competent workers are engaged. The competent worker makes a place for himself at the same time that he wins recognition and support for his department and program.

Strive for Cabinet Status

Today the need for capable public relations men and women is very great. Millard Fought comments on this in

"Postwar Public Relations," an article which appeared in *Tide*, March 8, 1946:

"Eventually, it is to be hoped, the profession of business public relations will mature to the point where its practitioners will both merit and be given the cabinet status on executives' staffs that they must have to deliver the sort of guidance and public relations which contemporary enterprise so badly needs—but hasn't got. But as long as the best substitute which any given company has to offer is a publicity man who is kept in the back office, like an old fire extinguisher, until trouble starts—and who then is called out to squirt a few innocuous but well-sounding statements around where something shoulders—we won't get much industrial or business statesmanship."

Big vs. Small Business

How soon the hopes of Mr. Fought will be realized no one can foresee. Great changes are taking place in business and government, and they affect public relations. A significant movement which apparently is under way at the moment is that big business is making wider and more intelligent use of public relations, while small business is turning away from extensive use of public relations. The reasons for this trend are not too clear. But some of them are beginning to be discernible. The management capable of operating a big business is alert enough to have become well informed about public relations and appreciative of its value. The top officials of such a management have been keen students of the techniques and tools of public relations. They have employed able directors and staff members. And they have engaged the services of competent counselors and consultants. They make full use of these forces in managing the companies they head. Both they and their public relations personnel keep abreast of what is going on and grow to meet problems and needs as they arise. They are reaping the rewards of this heads-up policy.

The officers of many small companies, on the other hand, are not so capable. Such interest as they have had in public relations was engendered by the great amount of talk about the subject they heard on all sides. They have been influenced to follow the leader. It seemed the thing to do. Everybody was putting in public relations so they should do likewise. But they have not really studied the tool and made it a part of their management kit. They have kept tongue in cheek. And so, they have not been too keen in their selection of public relations personnel. And they have not given the necessary support, in money and effort, to make their programs successful.

Demanding the Impossible

Now, with strikes tightening up their company operations, and with profits suffering, they are demanding impossible public relations results. And with those results not forthcoming, they are turning their backs on public relations, with an I-told-you-so attitude. "The thing" has not worked for them and they'll have no more of it.

How far this trend will go nobody can tell. It may or may not represent a turning point in the wild expansion of public relations. If strikes are settled, reconversion gets into full swing, and prosperous days come again, another surge of enthusiasm for public relations may sweep the country. In that event small as well as big business may be caught up in the whirlwind and swept to dizzy new heights.

A reassuring element in the picture is

that competent practitioners are becoming more securely fixed in their positions, receiving more recognition and compensation for their efforts, than at any other time in the history of public relations. And conversely the incompetent workman, who has been an opportunist, is beginning to be relegated to the status he deserves—deflation that will lead to ultimate elimination.

Must Play Important Role

Strikes such as the one at General Motors, carrying in their wake as they do heavy loss and disruption of normal living throughout the national economy, are bringing home to all of us a new realization of the tremendously important role public relations has to play in this period of world crisis. Government official, business leader, diplomat, educator, military man, farmer and labor leader—all see, albeit far too dimly, that the only hope of peace and security which the world has lies in the adoption and use of the principles of human fellowship on which sound public relations rest. They are beginning to realize that brotherhood of man must become a reality, not just an ideal; that nations and peoples must work together with understanding and respect in building a world that is stable and safe. Of all the mechanisms devised by man to date none offers so much in accomplishing this goal as public relations. To dignify it, to make it a living, vital force in our individual, corporate, government and world affairs should be the challenging task of each of us who bears the public relations label.

The Penalty of Leadership

"We sometimes speak of winning reputation as though that were the final goal. The truth is contrary to this. Reputation is a reward, to be sure, but it is really the beginning, not the end of endeavor. It should not be the signal for a let down, but rather, a reminder that the standards which won recognition can never again be lowered. From him who gives much—much is forever after expected."

—ALVAN MACAULEY.

New Tools

FOR THE PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE

By W. H. KNOWLES

Vice President, The Jam Handy Organization, Detroit

AT A RECENT GATHERING of public relations counsellors and public relations executives, held in connection with the annual meeting of the National Association of Manufacturers, it was brought out that most practitioners of the art and science of guiding public relations have in their past experience reporterorial or editorial experience with newspapers or national magazines. These gentlemen are skilled in the use of the printed word. They know the techniques of persuasive writing, they know news values, and they know the routine of preparing written articles to appeal to the taste of both editors and readers.

Regardless of what other kinds of experience, in business management, in human relations, salesmanship, or other, many have supplemented their editorial experience, it is very natural that in conveying impressions to the public, these people turn first to the printed word as their primary tool for implementing management's public educational plans.

As, however, the concept of the function of public relations has become broadened and as new responsibilities are being put on the shoulders of public relations executives, it is natural that new methods of informing and influencing people should be utilized.

The power of both the radio and the motion picture to sell products and ideas, to inform, to instruct, and to stimulate action, has been amply demonstrated. The motion picture lengthens or shortens skirts, puts milady's hair on the top of her head or lets it stream down her back, alters the configuration of the female body, and gets men out of high stiff collars, at least during their leisure hours.

Radio puts tunes and phrases on a

million lips and has shown its ability to sell goods and, to a somewhat lesser extent, its ability to sell abstract concepts and ideas.

Of these powerful new tools for the public relations executive, let us confine our elaboration to motion pictures and slide films alone.

For the purposes of discussion, let us use the broad definition of public relations which is "efforts devoted to making an institution economically successful and socially acceptable." Let us also follow the conventional pattern of dividing the general public into groups, or publics. These groups are—

- stock- and bondholders
- employees
- sales organization
- customers
- suppliers
- government
- the community, or general public.

In the design and use of visual presentations, either motion pictures or slide films, in helping management get across its ideas to these various publics, it is of supreme importance to appreciate that the techniques involved call for professional guidance of the highest order.

One of the outstanding motion pictures produced for improving relations with stockholders was sponsored by a large steel company. This picture, entitled "Behind the Annual Report," was designed for a primary audience of approximately 200 people. These were the stockholders and members of the press attending the annual stockholders' meeting.

The picture is divided into two parts. The first section presents information about manufacturing records, war pro-

duction achievements, and gives a pictorial review of manufacturing operations during the previous year. The second part of the picture is devoted to financial operations. One sequence gives a five-year comparison of operating figures, showing total sales volume and disbursements for outside purchases, salaries and wages, taxes, and dividends. This information is presented graphically so that the relative effect of changes in wage rates and tax rates is clearly depicted. Another sequence shows by means of animated graphs the division of the income dollar on a percentage basis. The entire financial story is presented with the same objectivity that characterizes an annual financial report.

Since its initial showing at the stockholders' meeting, this picture has been presented widely to groups of bankers and business men. It is also of interest to high school and college classes.

When it is realized that many of our major industrial enterprises have as many or more stockholders as they do employees, and that stockholders represent an important consuming group, the desirability of presenting complete factual information is readily apparent. Companies which make it a practice to hold stockholder meetings in leading cities will find that the motion picture, the slide film, or a series of glass slides will help to illuminate the message which they wish to give to audiences of this character.

Management-Employee Relations

Wide use is being made of motion pictures to give employees an over-all story of the nature of a business enterprise. Because of the high degree of specialization in industry today, it is often difficult for employees to understand how the work they do fits into the over-all work of the company or to appreciate the importance of their individual jobs. This is particularly true in banking or life insurance where much of the work appears

to be of a routine clerical nature but where, in fact, every job calls for a high degree of intelligence, accuracy, integrity, and speed. Motion pictures, covering the entire operation, give the employee an understanding of the "why" of his job and increase his self respect and feeling of importance. It is human nature to want to be part of a successful operation and to play on a winning team and when employees are given a comprehensive view of company objectives, company ideals, and company progress, they can be depended on to be more effective and more cooperative workers.

Explains Staff Functions

Motion pictures to show the relationship between departments of a business have a distinct value, particularly now that many companies are evolving staff operations which impinge on line operations throughout the different supervisory levels. The need for explaining organization structure exists not only at the lower supervisory levels but throughout the entire administrative chain.

Slide films and motion pictures are used to explain to employees such company benefits as insurance, pension plans, and health protection. With the many deductions from pay checks which have become familiar during the war period for war bonds, social security, pensions, groups insurance, and health insurance, it is very easy for an employee to lose sight of the fact that these things were carefully explained to him at the time he was hired or when he agreed to the wage deduction. A real explanation of the benefits which these deductions make possible is a powerful stimulus to employee morale.

An outstanding picture of full theatrical quality, cast, and direction, has recently been produced to explain the viewpoint of management on the subject of foremen's unions. This picture, in a convincing, dramatic story, expresses in a completely objective manner the viewpoints for and against the unionization

of foremen and leaves it up to the audience to draw its own conclusions. There is no impression throughout this picture that management is talking down to foremen, nor is there any attempt to minimize management's past mistakes. This document is a man-to-man presentation which can be shown before any audience regardless of preconceived opinions on this controversial subject. The audience reactions to this picture are extremely interesting, with this one expression running through nearly all the foremen's comments: "We had no idea that management understood so well what we foremen are up against."

What is a reaction like this worth in dollars and cents to management? Is not the first step in maintaining good relations with the foremen group, or in fact with any other employee group, an appreciation that management does have a broad understanding of workers' problems?

In the Sales Organization

The fact that motion pictures and slide films are used widely in sales training is not news to anyone, because both of these forms of visual presentations are a part of the stock-in-trade of the sales manager and director of sales training. Starting in the specialty selling field, the application of slide films has been broadened into almost every field of sales training.

Let us confine ourselves, however, to films designed for sales audiences, but whose purpose is to improve human relations.

Department stores make use of both motion pictures and slide films to improve the relations between retail clerks and customers. Banks use slide films to teach employees how to use the telephone as a means of making friends. Numerous motion pictures have been made to improve human deportment in business operations covering such fundamentals as "Don't Argue," "Don't Interrupt,"

"Listen Before You Speak," and "Smile." If habits of abruptness which were so apparent during the war period are to be corrected, it is evident that many more pictures of this nature will be needed in the future. Incidentally, the courtesy and pleasant deportment of your filling station attendant may stem back to stimulation which he received from either motion pictures or slide films produced by the company that makes your favorite brand of gasoline.

Since it is the salesman who most generally represents a company to the public, the importance of maintaining his morale and keeping a high polish on his deportment indicates a continuing field for public relations pictures of this nature. The sales force also constitutes an audience for the general employee picture and for all public relations pictures, since it is thereby provided with facts rather than impressions about the company's operations and policies.

Here again we shall avoid discussing the use of motion pictures and slide films for direct selling and confine our remarks to pictures whose primary purpose is to sell ideas and viewpoints of a public relations nature.

Naturally, any institutional motion picture is a public relations document. The modern trend in institutional pictures is to subordinate lengthy histories of the company's early trials and tribulations and to present in picture story form the things that the customer wants to know about the company's operation. Customers like to know the conditions under which workers work. They are also interested in research and in new developments. They feel it is a privilege to be taken behind the scenes and frequently are stimulated to great loyalty for an organization with which they feel they have an understanding and acquaintance.

Methods Are Many

Methods of presenting motion pictures to customer audiences are many and

varied. Customers are reached via the theater screen or via non-theatrical group showings. When a truly worthwhile program is offered, customer audiences of sizeable proportions are brought to a dealer's place of business and exposed to presentations of the product as well as presentations of an institutional nature. One large manufacturer conducted such a program in every state in the union, reaching audiences of unbelievable proportions, with the result that, generally speaking, customers are sold on the management of the corporation as well as on its products.

Supplier Relations

The importance of a corporation maintaining good relations with its suppliers was brought sharply to the fore during the period of war shortages. Many companies which before the war were engaged in stiff competitive selling activities found that the procurement of raw materials and supplies presented an equally competitive situation. Cases exist where sales managers with no sales problems to handle during the war period were put in charge of purchasing departments with excellent results. Their salesmanship and persuasive ability were found equally effective in dealing with suppliers.

When a corporation's major suppliers are a unified group, possessing economic strength and political influence, the need for maintaining good relations with this group is frequently the corporation's most important public relations problem. A case in point is a corporation engaged in meat packing. A large packing plant pays out to farmers, cattle growers, and feeders about seventy per cent of the money it takes in from customers. In a sense, the meat packer is the sales agent for the cattle raiser. Motion pictures have been found effective for explaining the economics of the meat packing industry to the supplier group. The mutuality of interest between meat packer

and cattle grower, the reasons why cattle prices vary from day to day, and even from hour to hour, and such factors as fluctuating consumer demand can all be presented in understandable terms to supplier audiences. A wide field exists for motion pictures and slide films to extend work of this nature.

Relations With Government

There is every reason to believe that the importance of maintaining good relations between business and government will increase rather than diminish, but to attempt to discuss relations with government as if government were a single entity would be the height of oversimplification. Every public relations man knows that he must deal with local governments, state governments, and the Federal Government. Likewise, any one of these governmental entities may impinge on a business in each of these four ways:

- government as a customer
- government as a regulatory body
- government as a taxing authority
- government as a source of credit.

Any one who has been engaged in producing war materials knows that each of these four faces of government speaks with its individual tongue. When government is the buyer, it expects to be accorded customer treatment. When government supplies credit, it speaks and acts like a banker. When government appears in its more conventional roles of regulatory or taxing authority, it has its own methods and procedures for requiring information.

Regardless, however, of government's four-sided function, one fact remains clear: The agents of government are people. They can be reasoned with. They accept, and even ask, information and understanding of business problems and business facts, and here is where the motion picture plays its part.

Motion pictures have been used to pre-

sent management's viewpoints in many ways. Motion pictures have been especially produced for use as evidence in patent suits to show the functioning of intricate mechanical devices. Motion pictures have been presented as evidence for the defense in suits brought by stockholders against management. Motion pictures have been presented before legislative groups, both local and national, for the purpose of giving the broad economic background of large corporations. Motion pictures, slide films, and glass slides have been incorporated in presentations before Senate investigating committees.

A large mining industry, confronted with the threat of greatly increased state taxation, produced a factual motion picture showing the large tonnage of rock which had to be brought to the surface to produce a single ounce of gold. The picture also shows the community benefits which the company sponsors, including hospitals, schools, and social centers. The picture was shown in every theater in the state where the mining property was located and the projected tax legislation did not pass.

Any business enterprise which feels that it is being adversely affected by existing or proposed legislation may well examine what steps it has taken to present its case before the people who make the laws. Let us repeat, government is made up of people, and people, regardless of their station, have given ample evidence that they like to receive information by means of visual presentations.

To the General Public

All of the foregoing uses of motion pictures may be regarded as highly specialized when compared with the use of motion pictures in presenting management's viewpoint to the general public. Probably the first use of motion pictures by industry was for presenting an institutional story to any public audience that could be found to look at it, and the use of pictures for this purpose goes back

many years to the days of silent motion pictures.

It cannot be said that these early efforts represented any very advanced understanding of public relations, since the pictures frequently ran to boresome length, were often braggadocio in character and were filled with tiresome detail. Usually these pictures followed a more or less definite pattern with great emphasis on the early history of the company and flattering details of the life and achievements of the founding fathers, all of whom seemed to be possessed of an unusual degree of human virtue. Manufacturing processes were explained in elaborate detail and the merits of the product were touted with little taste or restraint. However, these pictures found an audience and were at least successful enough to encourage further usage. And when we so frankly characterize the early institutional motion picture, we are but recognizing lack of technical skill in meeting public viewpoints which to some extent characterized the printed institutional advertising of that era.

Should Be Informative

Institutional pictures with a general publicity objective are still widely used. Today, however, they are skillfully prepared to present information in which the public has demonstrated its interest. Information gained through opinion research surveys forms the basis for many of these pictures. Information on company operations, number of employees, working conditions, manufacturing methods, research activities, financial status, and company policies are presented in a manner which is both interesting and entertaining. Audiences for these pictures are found among luncheon clubs, school groups, church groups, businessmen's clubs, study groups, and numerous other groups of people who regularly depend on the commercially sponsored picture for a part of their entertainment and education.

Specialists in the distribution of commercially sponsored motion pictures list 25,000 to 30,000 groups of people who have, or can secure, projection equipment and who regularly view pictures of this nature. It is not uncommon for large companies to have from 50 to 75 prints of a single picture in constant circulation. Audiences can be selected by geographical location, by size, by income level, or by nature of special interests.

Motion pictures on industrial research have a very wide appeal, particularly in the field of plastics, light metals, industrial chemistry, and electricity. Pictures of an economic nature designed by industry to give the general public a better understanding of our system of free enterprise also command a wide audience. Pictures dealing with labor questions and unionism, either for or against, are viewed by many people and help to determine the public attitude.

Since public utilities were among the first to grasp the significance of motion pictures for public relations purposes, numerous outstanding pictures have been produced in this field. Such questions as ownership, rates, taxation, future expansion plans, are treated in pictures of this nature. On certain occasions utilities have been stimulated to present their story in motion picture form because of a threat of municipal ownership or increased taxation or some adverse political development.

Properly designed public relations pictures confine themselves to a straightforward presentation of facts and permit the audience to draw its own conclusions from the facts presented. It is beyond the scope of the motion picture to argue or to tell people what they should think.

A series of public relations pictures, produced by one steel company, recognized the changing conditions which existed at the time of our entry into the war, the period of the war itself, and the post-war period. A large manufacturer of elec-

tric refrigerators and electric ranges has likewise kept the citizens of its community informed about its problems during conversion, during war production, and at the time of war termination.

If we accept the premise that public opinion about an industry is originally generated within the community where the company's plants are located, then the importance of maintaining good relations with all the citizens in all plant cities is readily apparent and it is here that a good opportunity lies for the effective use of motion pictures. What goes on within the factory enclosure? Workers' wives, workers' families, and workers' friends would like to know. Are working conditions good? Are safety precautions observed? What attention is given to employees' health? Is the worker being exploited by speed-up methods or unfair incentive payment plans? What does the company make? What interesting research work is going on? What are the opportunities for a young person starting his career? How does the plant contribute to the prosperity of the community? Does it pay its share of taxes? Is management composed of a group of selfish, grasping men, or is management forward-looking, constructive, and interested in improving the standard of living within the community?

Community Influence Groups

These are questions on which the motion picture can give the facts. Influence groups within the community, such as members of luncheon clubs, members of the clergy, members of the teaching profession, church groups, and schools are important factors in determining community attitudes towards business. Are the attitudes of these people to be based on their ignorance of the company's activities or upon their specific knowledge of the facts? The motion picture makes it possible for the public relations director to answer this question the way he would like to have it answered.

OUR OBJECTIVES in 1946

*By P. A. HOYT

Executive Vice President, Oliver United Filters Inc., Oakland, Calif.

OUR MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES may be grouped in two general classifications: First, our broad, long-range objectives and, second, our intermediate objectives. Those in the first classification are designed to keep our eyes focused on the ultimate goal, to help us chart an accurate course. Intermediate objectives are established for the purpose of gaining action on specific phases of our broad program.

In the first category our objectives, in all probability, closely parallel those of most successful American enterprises. They are: 1) To build the best engineered and manufactured product possible and to adequately service our customers. 2) To pay employees well and maintain good working conditions. 3) To keep the company in sound financial condition. 4) To provide stockholders with a reasonable return on their investment. 5) To build and keep a good reputation with vendors, customers, the general public and our employees. All these objectives are of equal importance. None can be neglected.

Now let's consider our intermediate objectives—our program of action for 1946—the points of particular emphasis in the months ahead.

Each year we have established certain functions to receive management emphasis. I believe that we have been guilty of over-emphasizing some of these activities

"EDITOR'S NOTE: "Our company," says Mr. Hoyt, "is betwixt and between—out of the stage of one-man management yet too small for an elaborate public relations department." *Our Objectives in 1946* is briefed from Mr. Hoyt's address to the management group of his company late in February. Oliver United Filters Inc. operates two plants, one in the East and one on the West coast. Each plant employs between 400 and 500 workers. Its products (principally custom-built industrial filters) are sold throughout the world.

to the possible detriment of others. This we must not continue. Each of our intermediate objectives must receive its fair share of recognition and emphasis. Only by so doing can we attain our broad objectives.

I am referring particularly to the all-out drives we have made for 1) getting orders for our products and, 2) making shipment of these orders. No one will dispute that these are laudable and necessary drives. There is no question but that we shall continue energetically to follow them. This year, however, our management group—executives at all levels, department heads, supervisors—must not for a moment lose sight of our other intermediate objectives. We must pursue them too with the diligence and enthusiasm which make for success.

In 1946 our "points for emphasis" are as follows:

Sales Department: The maintenance of a steady volume of incoming business; a more adequate training program for new employees; better service to foreign agents; selling selectively, yet to standards.

Engineering: Realization of costs; parts standardization; more push behind new design.

Manufacturing: Improved supervision; more supporting data for foremen; better selection of workmen; improved efficiency; tooling and planning to cut costs; reduction of man-hours per unit; job evaluation schedules.

Controller's Department: Inventory control; better selection of employees; cost control prior to engineering and manufacturing.

General Management: Endeavor to avoid the ill effects of inflation and/or deflation; the improvement of employee relations.

This last *point of emphasis* is a most important one. Although listed under the "General Management" heading, *Improving Employee Relations* becomes a primary assignment for each person in the management group. It is to this task that we shall turn our attention now, individually and collectively. Our measure of success in this undertaking may well be the measure of success for our other objectives. Good employee relations has a direct bearing on sales, engineering, production, and the other phases of our business.

We are living in an emotional age. The industrial workers of America can control the balance of voting power and of working power. A large segment of labor believes that big profits are being made and that the worker is not receiving his share; that business is only interested in labor as a commodity. It is our job to show our workmen that these beliefs are not correct; that their objectives and the objectives of management are not at odds, that they are, in fact, identical.

A Leftist Weapon

The silence of management, in our opinion, has proved to be the most effective leftist weapon available. Management has worked to raise the standard of living in America but has let the politician take the credit. Management has enabled business to pay higher wages and let the unions take the credit. Management has access to the worker half of his waking hours while the union representative has but a few minutes per day. Yet management has not done as good a selling job as has the union business agent. It is a management *sales job*. One we have failed to do. In fact, one we have even failed to try.

Public relations is a big job. It embraces the relations between you and our workers and their families, and the towns and communities in which they live and which they influence. Our employee relations program must be tailored to fit our

organization. There is no such thing as a standard or "canned" program for this job. We must build it to fit our needs, out of facts and understanding.

Our company is just betwixt and between. Just out of the stage of one-man management, where each employee can be individually dealt with by top management, yet still too small for an elaborate employee relations department. Therefore, greater responsibility falls on us, on you supervisors as management men. A lot more must be done toward humanizing our organization; toward understanding the other fellow's problems. There must be an intimate, friendly understanding built up by you with those under you. If business men, ourselves included, would devote as much time, effort and study to learning about human beings, their actions and reactions, as they have to the problems of production, sales, and finance, many of our current business headaches would quickly disappear.

In 170 years this nation of ours has grown to be the greatest in the world because of freedom—principally, *freedom of initiative*. An American loves his rights and will fight for them. You can not drive him. He wants to work *with* his boss and he will, when objectives and motives are clearly understood. It is our job to explain, again, again and again, if necessary, to gain understanding. No task should be assigned to a worker without careful explanation. Then check back later to determine if understanding exists. The employee will cooperate when there is understanding and hope for individual recognition.

A Serious Problem

One of the most serious problems facing American business today is found in the lack of full and intelligent worker cooperation. Because of this billions of dollars are allowed to leak out of our national productiveness in the form of low-quality man-hours put in by disinterested workers who, because of poor

morale, see no reason to give their best efforts. There is no other area of employee relations which holds greater challenge; none with greater potentials for wide benefits and values. Increasing the productivity of our present working force will mean lower unit costs and, therefore, more sales. Increased sales mean steady employment, job security, greater benefits for all we serve—employees, customers and stockholders.

How shall we attack this problem? What is it that causes one worker to produce 300 to 400 per cent more than another? Skill, of course, has a bearing on productivity, but there is another factor; a most important element in high-scale productivity. I mean the pride which a workman has in achievement, in producing a quality product, in his work place. The respect he has for his boss. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." If our workers believe that Oliver United Filters Inc. is a good place in which to work, that they are treated fairly, paid well; that they have opportunities for advancement and individual recognition; that they are producing worthwhile products of high quality—then we will have a team. Teamwork, based on understanding, cooperation and harmony, will go a long way toward increasing the productivity of our present force. On-the-job training programs will develop skills.

Must Have Employees' Support

Let us make our objectives known to every person in our organization. This is a sales job. These objectives must be interpreted in light of the workers' interests if we are to gain their okay—and we must have their support.

First we must eliminate any feeling that may exist in this organization that labor is an impersonal commodity. We must recognize our workers as individuals, citizens in a democracy, human beings subject to all the stresses and strains of our complex society—men, and women, contributing their share toward the suc-

cess of our company; entitled to individual recognition.

We can not expect, nor do we deserve, *blind loyalty*. Morale is made up of a lot of little things: A man's confidence in himself, his ability, his equipment, his leadership. The greeting he receives from his boss, his fellow workers. The cleanliness of our shops, offices, parking lots. The trimness of our hedges. The quality of our lighting. Little things, minutiae—but of such is morale built.

Through our news bulletins, group meetings, personal contacts, and with all other means at our disposal, we should strive constantly to place before our people the facts about our business. It's an interesting business. Facts, properly assembled and interestingly related, can go far toward correcting any misconceptions that may exist. Here are some of the things about which we should provide factual information for our employees:

- 1) Reports on operations; on production.
- 2) How the company, over the year, is trying to provide job security.
- 3) Help employees to know that this is their company, their business.
- 4) Show the value of and need for simplification; for engineering and manufacturing standards.
- 5) Explain pricing structure; why we can not charge any price we wish.
- 6) Illustrate how increased volume can reduce overhead; keep plants busy; benefits to be derived by all.
- 7) Show the meaning of narrowing margins, competition; rising costs versus fixed price formulas.
- 8) Point out how opportunity and promotion comes to those prepared for it, who are ever alert, who study.

These are but a few things needing airing. You men of management will think of others. I want you to let me know what they are so we can get into action on them.

True management success comes from using the knowledge of specialists. We

(Continued on page 32)

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

The Glamour Girl of the Professions

By JOS. W. HICKS

President, Jos. W. Hicks Organization, Public & Industrial Relations Counsel, Chicago

I RECENTLY RECEIVED twenty telephone calls in one day—I kept an actual count—from friends who had friends who were just out of the service, had worked in government agencies or war plants, or had had temporary jobs on newspapers until the original job holders got back from the service. All of them “thought they’d like to get into public relations,” and would I talk to them and give them some advice . . . or a job? Some days I get fewer, some days more, of this same kind of calls.

A few of these friends of friends of mine had been in some phase of so-called public relations activity during the war. Others had had a little newspaper or advertising experience before the war. Still others had never had any training or experience at all in any of the fields related to the molding of public opinion. Some of them even lacked the general educational background and personality necessary to meet and deal successfully with the public. Yet all of them felt they were ready to go from a wartime job, or no job, into a public relations job as casually as they might step out of a Ford and into a Plymouth and drive merrily away.

Of course I also had telephone calls from seasoned public relations men just released from the service or wartime responsibilities. But these men, even when they did not have a definite position in sight, at least had the qualifications, and better than an ordinary idea of what a public relations man is and does.

We want to be helpful to veterans. In fact, we have four veterans on our staff who are well trained and know the score. One was a reporter and feature writer for some of the country’s largest daily newspapers before joining the Air Corps, and

he came to us with sound experience, also, in industrial editing and industrial relations. The second had done public relations work in the Navy for four years and before that had been a newspaper man and successful author, and had also done a trick with motion pictures. The third had had his own public relations firm before entering the service, and the fourth is an experienced radio producer.

However, the twenty telephone calls in one day of which I originally spoke were, to me at least, indicative of the fact that public relations today is the glamour girl of the professions. It has taken the place in the career spotlight that the newspaper profession occupied twenty years ago, in that so many people think public relations is exciting and new, and want to take a whirl at it. Proof it has supplanted the newspaper field in this regard is the fact that so many newspaper men themselves are entering the public relations realm.

One certain indication of the tender age of the profession is that it has not yet reached a stage where it can begin to take care of its own turnover, which is altogether too great. This is mostly true because there has been a mushroom growth of too many so-called public relations firms and too many new and inexperienced persons entering the field and peddling their wares to people who don’t know what they’re buying.

I don’t mean to imply that all newcomers in the public relations consulting profession are inexperienced. But many of them have had experience solely in newspaper or straight publicity writing, which is only one facet of public relations technique. They hang out a shingle, get an account or two, and by the time

account number three comes along they hire an assistant who in all probability has had even less experience than his boss—otherwise he would have hung out his own shingle first. Then when account number one, two or number three goes out the window the new assistant goes out too, looking for a new job.

Experienced Men Too

The turnover of which I speak is not confined to the new firms in the field. At the time of this writing I have "confidential" applications for employment from persons now employed by five of the oldest and best known publicity and public relations firms in Chicago and ten from persons now employed by established firms in New York and other cities. None of these applications is more than thirty days old, and none of the applicants has had less than three years experience, and some have had up to fifteen.

It is within my own memory as a newspaper man nearly thirty years ago that a good reporter could always get a job. Fired or just quit, he could run to the opposition or to another city and get a new beat. Good desk men could always find a trick on a local sheet until they were picked up by a chain. By the time some of them reached managing editors jobs they had developed their own rugged personalities and stayed put. Many of them I know are still there. In the meantime the journalism schools and small town dailies and weeklies were turning out embryo journalists at a rate that could not be absorbed by the press and radio combined—not even with the vacancies being created by newspaper men leaving their jobs to enter the new field of publicity.

My reference to journalism schools is not to be construed as an unsympathetic one. I attended and graduated from one. Even taught in one. I sometimes wonder why I attended a journalism school when I had already had six years of newspaper experience, including a couple of pretty

good editorial responsibilities and the correspondency for a press service. An honest analysis of myself would probably show that I entered the school because it looked like a snap course and, after six years practical experience, the shortest route to a degree.

After college, four more years of newspapering and corresponding found me facing the temptations of a house organ job. The next step was publicity and sixteen years of public utility public relations work. And it was then that I learned that public relations is more than publicity or press agency. My assignments began to include magazine writing, preparing press relations, doing national and state legislative work, promoting customer-ownership, fighting inroads of government interference with private enterprise, conducting election campaigns for franchise renewals, helping prepare cases for hearings before state commissions and federal agencies such as the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Power Commission, the SEC and Federal courts on matters of reorganization. Never a dull moment and I loved it; loved it so much I decided to go into it professionally as an independent consultant, starting my own payroll after being on one that had belonged to somebody else for twenty-one years, renting an office, buying equipment and finding a staff, building an organization.

Building an Organization

That "building an organization" seemed important to me because I had been supplied with capable assistance when I worked for somebody else and, while I had taken the jump "on my own," I reasoned I had to have some equipment, service and brains other than just mine in order to build a public relations service that would grow and be a credit to the profession.

It has taken almost as long a time to build a good organization as it did to finally make up my mind to leave a pay-

roll and start a business of my own. But I have a staff now I am proud of—a mixture that works smoothly together—people who are liked by our clients because of their ability, flexibility and willingness to give good service as a team. There are former newspaper men and women, school teachers, a college professor, a lawyer for corporate and legislative work, a research expert and statistician, a home economist and food writer, industrial editor, radio production expert, bookkeeper, stenographers, filing clerks, mimeograph and addressograph operators—each in his or her own way individually or collectively helping solve our clients' public relations problems. And of it all, less than twenty per cent of total staff time is consumed in publicity work, despite the fact that for one client alone, not to mention many others served at the same time, we received over 3,000 clippings with combined circulation in excess of 1,698,000,000 in less than twelve months. These were based entirely on releases we had made for that client, not as a publicity job but as part of an overall designed and planned public relations program.

The public relations profession is exciting to me and every person in my organization. We think the combination of dealing with people and ideas is more stimulating and satisfying than anything else we could ever do. Otherwise we wouldn't put up with the irregular hours and tremendous pressure it sometimes involves.

Patience Needed

The job also requires patience. That's what our newer and younger staff members have to learn first. The client is in one of three states when he comes to us . . . he is either in trouble, expects trouble, or wants to plan to avoid trouble. In any case, he's probably worried. He may know what he wants . . . which isn't always what he needs. If he thinks he knows what he needs, study of his case

supplemented by research and survey is necessary to prove he is right, or wrong, and determine the right course to pursue.

The Client Speaks

The client will probably tell you one of two things at the outset or early in your relationship with him . . . either that he knows a lot about advertising and publicity, research and promotion, and molding public opinion, or else that he doesn't know a thing about any of the techniques of public relations. The second kind is the kind to keep your eye on. He probably knows most of the answers and the questions too; just needs some help. Maybe he's tired of having his own vice presidents or other organization members "yes" him all the time. He may be hungry for somebody who will say "no" occasionally. At any rate, when he says he doesn't know, nine times out of ten he's just playing dumb to find out how dumb the "expert" is. And for sure he's not the client who seems to have the idea this new miracle yogi of public relations can be purchased by the pound, sack or carload.

I'll never forget the business agent for a racketeering labor union who came into my office late one afternoon. He wore a derby, chewed the stub of a stale stogie, had a bodyguard with a bulge in his pocket, and both he and the guard talked with a "dese, dem and dose" inflection. He said,

"I unnerstand from some of de newspaper guys you're an expoit on dis public relations stuff and I wanna buy some of it." With which he pulled out a roll of thousand dollar bills, spread twenty-five of them out on the desk and said, "There's twenty-five G's and there's plenty more where that came from."

I asked him what his trouble was, what he wanted to accomplish, and he pointed in the direction of one of Chicago's large newspaper offices.

"Dose guys over dere been riding hell out of our union," he said, "got us in a

lot of trouble, made us clean up our way of doin' things. We finally done what dey wanted. Now dey won't give us credit for straightenin' things up. Now, by God, we want to hire you to get on dere tails and make dem say we're okay."

I tried to explain that I thought he over-estimated our ability—that we were not in a position to take on an account of that nature—and suggested they employ a direct approach rather than going through an intermediary. And it wasn't as hard as it might seem to hand back the "twenty-five G's" and thank the gentlemen for honoring us with a visit.

Since Adam and Eve

The public relations profession is not as new as it might be supposed. It really began in the Garden of Eden when Eve donned a fig leaf. That was the first time anybody ever altered their habits because of what someone might think, or what they wanted someone to think.

The Biblical verse, "Glory to God on the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will," applies, however unwittingly, to the public relations profession, for the public relations man certainly is a man of good will. And Benjamin Franklin might well have had public relations in mind when he had Poor Richard say, "God helps them that help themselves," for it is not enough to want people to think well of us, we must explain ourselves in such a way that they will understand and approve.

In earlier days people's and organizations' contacts were chiefly within their own small communities. Their public was so close at hand they could hardly escape knowledge of their "public relations." Their activities were thus automatically and quickly adjusted to meet the force of public opinion.

The industrial age changed all that. Factories grew, and around them grew cities. Sailing ships gave way to steamers, the stagecoach disappeared and the railroad arrived. Autos came, and trucks and

airplanes, and telegrams and telephones and radio. Manufacturers found themselves selling their products to strangers thousands of miles away—perhaps on the other side of the globe. Management found itself with thousands of employees, of whom it could know only a handful individually.

While a few of the wiser ones of the early industrialists were amazingly expert at keeping in touch with their public and their employees, the majority of these "practical business men" actually lived in ivory towers, misunderstood by and misunderstanding the world on which the success and long life of their enterprises ultimately depended. It was about this time the "public be damned" theory evolved. When trouble inevitably followed, society was too complex for management to sit down and talk it over with the public. A specialist skilled in feeling the public pulse and getting industry's message to the public was needed, and a specialist was found in the public relations organization.

A Definition

Public relations has become complicated in the same degree communications, information and educational media, and our whole social and economic structure, have become complicated but the function of the public relations counselor remains the same—that of helping build and maintain the stature and dignity of the organization, individual, product, service or idea with which he is concerned, in the eyes of the public. And that is my definition of public relations.

Public relations is a true child of democracy, for it not only assumes that the public's opinion is important but admits the necessity of educating the public so that its opinion will be based on knowledge and understanding.

The relative importance of the four principal public relations tools used to mold public opinion—publicity, advertising, personal contact and industrial re-

lations—varies greatly according to the specific public relations problem. The procedure our organization adopts—in determining which of these tools to use, and when and how—follows a standard pattern of consultation, survey and recommendation of specific activities, not only at the outset but whenever conditions indicate.

The public relations counsel has one great advantage generally over his fellow professional man, the physician, in that he is paid to keep his client well—though Lord knows we get our share of stretcher cases too. Like the doctors, we cannot over-emphasize the importance of continuous consultation and having the complete confidence of the client. The place of the public relations man must be on the top executive level. He should be accountable only to the policy head and be able to work on an equal basis with all other top officials.

A public relations counselor must have courage. Weakness in many organizations lies partly at the top and one of the functions of the public relations man is to fear no official, to tell the truth, "even when it hurts." This duty is a difficult one in any case, but one of the advantages the public relations consultant has over the public relations director within a single company is that it is easier—and sometimes more effective too—to speak in the role of an impartial bystander rather than as an employee.

The Place of Advertising

Industry is slowly coming to realize that public relations cannot successfully "just be handled by the advertising manager" in addition to his other duties, or in any way be subordinate to advertising. Advertising is a part of the public relations of an organization and the public relations counsel, be he employee of the company or independent consultant, must be able to help guide the advertising department or agency in so far as public relations are concerned. The advertising

agencies that are adding public relations departments are putting the cart before the horse. Public relations cannot be "added" to anything. It must lead the way in all matters of policy where public reaction may be concerned.

The scope of the activities on which the public relations man must offer his advice is so broad that his motives are often misunderstood. He must take great care that no one can justly accuse him of "trying to run the business." Running the business is not one of the functions of the public relations counselor, and it should be made clear to his critics that his influence comes to bear only in connection with the organization's relations with the public.

Potent Influence

The position the public relations counsel occupies as interpreter of the public to management and management to the public gives the profession a potent influence on our whole economic and social structure, and an opportunity to be of great service to the world as a whole. This responsibility, if nothing else, would make it necessary for public relations to be regarded as a profession and for its standards of ethics to be held high enough to obviate any public distrust of its power.

Such standards are already adhered to by a limited number of individual public relations counselors. However, they will never receive the public recognition the codes of the medical profession or the legal profession enjoy as long as there are half a dozen or more associations clamoring for recognition and offering diverse—if not actually contradictory—codes of ethics, definitions and explanations and trying to "organize" or regiment the profession with questionable standards or none at all.

The public relations profession today needs better public relations for itself. One or two well organized associations can help police the growing glamour girl and make of her a capable and respect-

able business woman. But if too many pseudo-practitioners or "meal ticket forces" carry their flirtations beyond the realm of good judgment and necessity they will turn the glamour girl into a common prostitute.

Opposed as I am to government regulation of business, I nevertheless believe we must look forward to a time when the public and the profession will be protected by laws or standards requiring persons wishing to enter the public relations profession to meet certain educational requirements and pass an examination similar to that taken by lawyers, certified public accountants, investment and insurance underwriters and other professional men before being licensed to practice public relations.

One of the profession's immediate problems is education. Right now educational opportunities for young men and women wishing to become public relations counselors are woefully inadequate. A recent survey showed only twenty-one colleges and universities listing courses in public relations and only forty-two offering such allied courses as publicity, propaganda analysis and public opinion.

Even this is misleading, for public relations cannot be taught in an undergraduate course. Or in several courses. A professional degree in public relations should be granted only as a master's or doctor's degree. And the requirements for admission into the graduate school of public relations should include four years of regular college work plus practical experience, or internship, in the business world in at least one of the fields concerned with the dissemination of information.

If that seems like a large order . . . well, being a public relations counsel is a large order.

We who are paid to help solve other people's public relations problems should not find our own too difficult. But it is essential that we be on guard against giving the public the impression that public relations is a glamorous profession in a cheap sense, or that it is a road to power. We must sell it, instead, for what it is: a service to both client and public that they may better understand one another. And we must sell the public relations counsel as the responsible professional man he is, emphasizing his place and function as a specialist in our complex modern world.

OUR OBJECTIVES IN 1946

(Continued from page 26)

have many. We have many hundreds of years of employee experience and "know how" in our management group. I wish that each of you would place yourself in top management's spot, responsible for the continued steady employment of hundreds of fine workmen. Then let's join forces in tackling these basic problems in employee relations. They have too long been side-tracked for the seemingly more urgent drives in sales and production.

Let's re-emphasize our need for the ideas and suggestions of our workers. Let us prove beyond question that job security does not come from nationalization of industry, from the unions, or by government edict. Let's show that wages and

salaries can be raised through increased efficiency *without impairment of job security*—but that increased pay *without* improved production will impair security of employment; that the government can not guarantee full-employment or full-production except on slave-labor levels as in Russia.

We of management have a great responsibility, a stimulating challenge, an interesting and important opportunity. If we can measure up to the task we will extend our company life and influence, maintain our products as leaders in their fields, and strike a sturdy blow in defense of our great American system of free, competitive enterprise.

The Chamber of Commerce: A PUBLIC RELATIONS RESOURCE

By LOUIS B. LUNDBORG

General Manager, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce

To SPEAK of the public relations problems of a chamber of commerce may be carrying coals to Newcastle—a little like speaking of the legal problems of a lawyer or the financial problems of a bank. For the entire existence of a chamber of commerce is one of public relations. Yet it has public relations problems of its own, as an institution, separate from the public relations functions it performs for others.

A chamber of commerce is created as the public relations instrument of the community, and as one of the public relations implements of its members. It is one of the principal means through which a large segment of public opinion is mobilized on community issues.

Unlike almost any other institution, its entire life cycle is spent in the public realm. Its raw materials, its processing plant, its personnel, its products, its sales and distribution system—all are composed of one or another of the “publics.”

Because it is one of the primary public relations resources, the tool kit of the public relations technician is not complete without a proper understanding of what a chamber of commerce is, what it is not, and how it does and does not function.

The base on which the chamber is built, of course, is its membership—the business and professional men who have banded themselves together to do those things collectively that they couldn't do, or that they couldn't do as efficiently, by themselves. They organize to do those things that will promote the general welfare of the community, and particularly to promote the economic welfare, the commerce, trade and industry of the community, because that is the special province of the chamber of commerce.

Because 5,000 or 500 members can't handle everything directly and function fast enough to be effective, the members delegate to a board of directors the responsibility for guiding and shaping the organization. They look to the board of directors to adopt basic policies to guide the chamber; to decide what fields of activity it should undertake, what should be the scope of these activities and the relative emphasis it should give to each in its program of work. The board has the responsibility of deciding how large the budget must be to finance this program of work, and then going to the community to get the funds.

In arriving at its decisions on policies and programs, the board has the benefit of advice and counsel from committees, who are appointed under authority of the board by its presiding officer. For the execution of the chamber's program, the board selects a manager who develops a staff of trained people to administer each of the fields of chamber work.

What are those fields of work? While they may vary widely, depending upon the needs and the resources of particular areas—emphasizing *foreign trade* in a seaport city, *agriculture* inland, *aviation* in one place, *tourist trade* in another—they all will fall into four main categories:

1) The most obvious job, the one that everyone thinks of in connection with a chamber of commerce—and it is basic—is research and information; the assembling of facts, so that anyone in the community, or anywhere else in the world, will have one central place to which he may come for complete and accurate factual data about the community, its business, and its markets.

2) Going beyond that, the chamber is

created to attract and to develop new industry, new enterprise, new markets and new customers for the area.

3) Recognizing that the best inducement to new enterprise is to show evidence that existing enterprise is prospering, the members have pooled their resources in the chamber as an agency to help members in the solution of their own problems, in improving their business practices and standards, in analyzing and expanding their markets, in their raw materials, transportation, freight rate and other problems, and in their relations with regulatory and other government agencies.

4) Finally, it has been recognized that if trade, commerce and industry are to prosper, the conditions under which they operate must be such that they can prosper. So the Number One job of the chamber, as a premise to all of its other promotional and service jobs, is to seek to maintain a healthy atmosphere, in terms of physical facilities, governmental policies, both local, state and federal, and public services of all kinds—to make, in general, the kind of community where people will want to live, to work, and to do business.

So the chamber is a combination of a research, service, promotion, and policy-forming organization.

What are the relationships between the several parts of the chamber in doing these jobs? Obviously the job of service to the public and to members is a full-time professional staff job, involving highly technical considerations of trade practices, government regulations and economic data. The promotional job, of seeking new industries and expanding markets for new and old industries, is more of a joint effort. Staff departments must take the primary responsibility, but they must call upon all the resources of the chamber and the community—committees, directors, and others—to help in many promotional ways.

The job that calls upon the entire or-

ganization is the job of shaping policies and programs on public issues that affect the basic conditions of the community. Staff members assemble data, committees conduct hearings and develop recommendations, the board arrives at final conclusions, and often the entire membership is asked to join in support of the conclusions, if it involves legislative or other public action.

While chamber of commerce in America date back to 1768, the modern chamber with its professional, technical approach to business and community problems is largely a development of the last 40 years. As its program has evolved, the modern chamber has tended to develop basic policies that reflect a keen awareness of the public interest. The following statement is typical of the policies that have been formally adopted, or informally observed, by the modern American chamber:

"The chamber is a community-wide organization, serving the entire community—not one segment of it, either geographically, economically, politically, or socially.

"To serve and to promote the entire community successfully, the chamber must have the backing of the entire community; so just as it does not promote any one member against his competitor, neither does it promote one group against another. While it is supported principally by employers, it is not set up to represent employers as against labor, but to work for those things that will benefit the entire business process, including both employer and labor, owner and manager, buyer and seller.

"The chamber is not political, in that it is not concerned with who holds any office, but only with the policies and programs of those offices.

"The chamber does not avoid controversy—much of what it does is in controversial fields—but in a controversy in which the members or other elements of the community are divided, it does not

act without giving interested and affected groups an opportunity to be heard; and before it takes sides in a controversy, the chamber must be satisfied that the best interest of the entire community will be served by its taking a stand. What it does may have the effect of favoring one group or interest, but it never acts on behalf of that group or interest—the action must be in behalf of the best interest of the entire community."

Obviously enough the job of a chamber of commerce, on behalf of its members and its community, is a job of public relations. Every undertaking of every chamber involves crystallizing the support or winning the understanding of some segment of the public, somewhere, for some idea, project, issue or set of facts. It may be selling the whole community to a new industry, or to a touring public; convincing the home-town public that it should support a bond issue for city improvement, or should defeat a damaging ordinance; interpreting misunderstood facts about the community to a nearby or distant community; reconciling differences between conflicting elements within the community; persuading a State or Federal Commission that it should make desired changes in highway, railroad, air line or other routes, rates and rules—or it may be any of thousands of other things that will benefit a community, and that one public must ask another public to do.

And what of the chamber's own public relations? It is axiomatic that if it is to serve its community, it must be strong, well financed, well staffed, well supported by volunteer workers, well regarded by public officials and by other institutions in the community.

It hardly would seem necessary to convince people that if they want their community to stay in the lead in the competition for trade and industry; if they want the community kept attractive, healthy, orderly, its traffic free-flowing, its living and working zones kept in sound

relation; if they want business to have an opportunity to prosper and to provide jobs, the people themselves should insist that there be a strong chamber of commerce to work for all of these things. Unfortunately, it isn't as simple as that.

The place of the chamber in the modern community fabric has to be told and interpreted and explained and sold, day after day, to each new crop of citizens.

It has to be sold to each new crop of business men, for their own sake and for each other's sake. For the well-being of each one depends on having the other one in the fold. The promotional or community betterment dollars of one chamber member will do twice the work if they are matched by those of an additional member. The volunteer manpower of one member on a community project will be twice as effective if matched by another member.

So a chamber has all of the same public relations problems as any private business firm, plus a few more of its own. It must do its own straight selling job for membership support. It must enlist active member participation in committee and project work. It must have the cooperation of other organized groups, as well as individuals. It must have the cooperation of public officials, at home and abroad. It must have the cooperation of the press and other media of public expression.

Above all, it must have the understanding and support of the general public in its community.

In the course of seeking their public relations objectives, either on chamber projects or on selling the chamber as an institution, chambers of commerce throughout America have occasion to employ every public relations technique and tool available to the public relations profession. That they have used them well is demonstrated by the vigorous growth and sound progress of the chamber of commerce movement in the past forty years, and most especially in the past two troublesome decades of world upheaval.

THE WEATHERVANE

By VIRGIL L. RANKIN

Public Relations Consultant, San Francisco

Who Is Influencing Whom?

Across the desk, during the past two weeks, have come reprints of several talks. All had three things in common: 1) They were delivered by men high in the executive councils of business and industry; 2) they were designed to "sell" free enterprise; and 3) audiences consisted principally of *free-enterprisers*—owners, managers, executives.

No doubt these talks served some useful purpose. They were interesting, inspirational; and in part, educational. But, one might question: Do business conventions, advertising clubs, industry conclaves, and the like, constitute good *prospects*? Are not those who make up these meeting already *sold*?

In this effort to obtain better understanding in behalf of the American profit and loss system would it not be more effective to address audiences of employees, teachers, students, farmers— influence groups outside the area of business management? And key the talk to *their* interests? The distribution of reprints would then perform a better selling job too.

Poor Public Relations in the Making

From several sources have come reports that door-to-door salesmen for certain national organizations are gaining the attention of housewives by representing themselves as pollsters or researchers. These salesmen state that they are making a survey, ask several leading questions, then launch their high-pressure sales talks. Such deceptive devices create poor public relations for all house-to-house selling. And it won't make easier the job of the legitimate interviewer.

50 Years Ago

Back in 1896 the following item ap-

peared in *Printers' Ink*: "The business of advertisement writing is almost as little understood today as it was five years ago. Five years ago there were only three or four people at it, and now, I suppose, there are almost three or four hundred. There are about thirty who advertise themselves as advertisement writers. . . . At least twenty-five of these men ought not to be in business at all."

One hears much the same about public relations practitioners today. The field is growing by leaps and bounds; offices are being opened on a wide scale. Not so many years ago one could count on the fingers of his two hands the public relations consultants or counselors listed in any major city. Today the Manhattan classified directory carries 220 listings under "Public Relations Counselors"; Chicago lists 69 under this heading and carries an additional four columns of "Management Engineers" and "Business Counselors," many of whom profess expertise in public relations too.

Public Relations for Schools

Two interesting articles concerning public relations for schools appear in the current issue of the *American School Board Journal*, national educational administrative magazine.

The question of a public relations budget for schools is discussed by Calvin Greider, Professor of School Administration at the University of Colorado, in "Can School Expenditures for Public Relations Be Justified?" Professor Greider declares that money spent on helping the public understand their schools should be included in the regular budget and should not be covered under vague, miscellaneous terms that "savour of budget padding."

A planned program of public relations

activity under a planned budget of expenses is the answer to many of the present difficulties of education today, believes Professor Grieder.

In the second article, Charles G. Mason, superintendent of schools at Tulsa, Oklahoma, shows a step-by-step program for school expansion and building as it was carried out in his city. "Public Relations and Bond Issues" provides a workable program for gaining public acceptance and recognition of the needs of a city school system.

Beginning with the realization that voters' acceptance of the need for a bond issue for schools was necessary, Mr. Mason planned a program that included school surveys made by prominent citizens at the invitation of the school board, press coverage of the results of the survey, and the formation of a postwar school planning committee among the citizens. The result of all the work was the passing by a large majority of a resolution authorizing school bonds in the amount of \$5½ millions.

Paging Mr. Webster

Out of the infant television studios are rolling newly coined words and startling new definitions for old standbys. So that you may be "in the know" The National Broadcasting Company is currently distributing to interested individuals copies of *Television Talk*, a 64-page glossary. A much larger, case-bound edition is planned for later this year.

Good Employee Relations

Every month The Radio Corporation of America distributes to its employees a booklet which informally discusses some phase of the business. These booklets, passed out with pay checks, are designed to keep all employees informed on what management is doing.

The current issue, "You, I, and RCA Victor," presents the company's national advertising plans with emphasis upon what these plans mean to individuals

within the company . . . the employees. It ties them in, too; makes them responsible for carrying through the job started by advertising. These excerpts will illustrate:

"Advertising helps to sell more products to more people. This results in greater production and therefore creates more jobs, builds security and provides opportunities for advancement. In a sense, we can say that a good, productive advertising dollar brings in the dollar that ultimately lands in your paycheck."

" . . . It is not enough for the ads to be good, the products must be good. . . . Each of us—no matter what his or her job—has a personal responsibility to make our products measure up to the highest quality."

"Every contact we make personally with our friends, relatives and the public has an impact on the sale of our products. People give a great deal of weight to the opinions of those who work for a company in whose products they are interested. If those who work on a product believe in it and 'talk it up' it must be good, they reason."

Employees are also told that RCA ads will appear in 141 carefully selected publications during 1946; of the millions of potential customers thus reached. Millions of dollars spent for advertising to employees of many companies, remains a deep, dark mystery. RCA has forthrightly explained—and gained the understanding and support of its employees.

Ivory Tower Sophisticate

Helping to make a stretcher case of advertising is Howard G. Sawyer, vice president, James Thomas Chirug Company, advertising agency. Sawyer, in an attempt to defend *offensive advertising* (*Printers' Ink*, March 1) blames the whole matter on the public which he terms "a jerk."

The public, claims Sawyer, does more than stand for offensive advertising—it actively supports it, asks for it. The advertiser and the agency therefore have to

use offensive advertising in order to sell the goods they are committed to selling.

Sawyer indicts advertisers and agencies when he says that neither, being the deciding factor or final authority in a sale, can be expected to be so quixotic as to stand upon principles at the risk of losing the business. "The public alone," he says, "has a free will, and the public is a jerk."

Fearful that *P. I.* readers might themselves be "jerks" he goes further to make his meaning clear. He says that the public is a fool, going insane fast, has bad judgment, worse taste, is largely and irrevocably stupid, a perpetual adolescent of very low calibre. He advises: "Approach it at a low mental level, pander to its cheaper nature, hammer away hard enough at what you want it to do—and you'll get results."

If Sawyer is airing the philosophy of modern advertising then it becomes apparent that there will be work aplenty for public relations practitioners. And, unfortunately, there will be a lot of stretcher cases.

The public is no jerk. It is sometimes slow in becoming aroused, but when it does there's evidence aplenty that it thinks straight and does something about it.

Strike Advertising

During the past few months everyone has had the opportunity of reading and analyzing page after page of strike advertising originated by both industry and the unions. How effective has it been? What results have been achieved? These are difficult questions to answer. Even those in the inner circles of participating managements and unions can not agree.

In the case of General Electric, for example: Frank LaClave credits his company's pre-strike-planned advertising campaign with the preservation of employee and community good will. That may have been management's objective and, if so, the campaign may be indeed

an effective one. On the other hand Bronson Batchelor, N. Y. public relations consultant, comments: "General Electric's leaders have done a good job, but when the pay-off came did they get any different treatment than anybody else from labor? They did not."

The unions in this case (United Electrical Workers, CIO) used some 40,000 more lines in Schenectady newspapers than did GE. And the striking union credits this advertising with "getting community sentiment on our side."

Currently gaining the attention of public relations people is the continued advertising of Westinghouse. Belligerent copy appeals directly to employees to repudiate their union leadership; asks if U.E. leaders are trying to wreck the company or the union, or if they have more sinister designs.

A Different Approach

In contrast with the defensive, fire-department advertising of strike-bound companies is the series of advertisements by the Manufacturers Association of Jamestown.

Written in down-to-earth language and directed to "Mrs. Murphy"—a typical, middle aged housewife—the easily read message gets over some of the facts of business life. One ad shows Mrs. Murphy, with a broom, going after an executive behind his desk. He is saying "Don't shoot, Mrs. Murphy, I'll talk."

The copy continues: "Don't shoot him, Mrs. Murphy . . . even if he is a businessman. He's a worker too. He's been hired—he and his brains—to run a factory."

Other ads in the series point up the necessity for steady, maximum production, no work stoppages, etc. All use a semi-humorous cartoon, short copy.

The association reports that it has ample evidence that the Murphy series has been eagerly read. It has also greatly increased the acceptance of the association's more orthodox advertisements.

For the Women

A good public relations piece has been distributed to all women employees and stockholders of Standard Oil Co. of Indiana. In it Robert E. Wilson, Chairman of the Board, tells the ladies, "We don't know how we could have managed without you during the war." Asks them to help the company in earning dividends for them by checking up on the house-keeping at company service stations and by making suggestions for bettering the organization.

The brochure pays tribute to women as employees, with illustrations of women engaged in company affairs; to women stockholders (40 per cent of total); and to women customers. A well designed good will builder.

Higher Ethical Value?

Challenging to public relations men of business and industry is the resolution recently passed by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Adopted on the theory that the co-operative movement (as opposed to free enterprise) frees man from economic slavery, the resolution reads: "We are convinced that all Christians recognize the higher ethical value inherent in the cooperative as over against the competitive motive, and that as cooperation is emphasized and competition subordinated we approach more nearly the teachings of Jesus. We therefore encourage the extension of cooperative techniques and other similar means of bringing about economic justice and brotherhood."

Regulation of Public Opinion Polls

A bill has been introduced in the New York State Senate to add an article to the General Business Law to regulate public opinion polls.

The proposed bill requires that full details regarding the nature of the poll, the names and addresses of sponsors, pollsters, interviewers and any others connected with the poll, the ballot or other material used, the results of the poll, territories covered, *et cetera*, be filed with the secretary of state within thirty days after the conclusion of any poll of public opinion on any question of public interest.

Failure to file the foregoing statement would constitute a misdemeanor as would publishing results of any poll which vary in any respect from the results as shown in the statement filed with the secretary of state.

Industry's Good Points

"It is significant that the present number of strikes in relationship to total labor agreements is of minute percentage," C. F. Mugridge, New York labor relations consultant, told members of the National Association of Public Relations Counsel, Inc., recently. He continued: "What are the reasons so many employers and unions are able to live with each other harmoniously? This question affords opportunity to challenge you folks, engaged primarily in informing the public of industry's good points. It is difficult to recall an industrial public relations program emphasizing a satisfactory and constructive management-union relationship. Perhaps in your field—and I am candid rather than caustic—there has been a tendency to play a fireman's rôle, defending company attitude after the strike is under way. . . . These efforts are admirable but their results questionable, for the public needs to know the reasons for healthy relations in order to appraise accurately the causes for unhealthy conditions. And the public really has a right to know about these vital things."

"When you know you are doing your job perfectly—look for ways to improve it—or someone else will."—R. SHANNON.

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